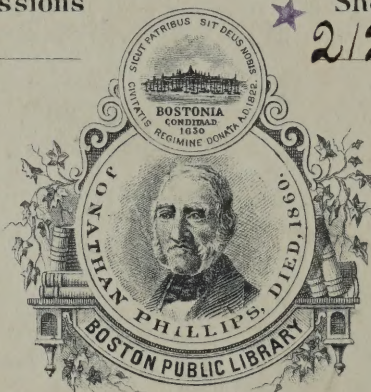




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THE
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AN
EPISTLE,
TO RICHARD HEBER, ESQ.

BY JOHN FERRIAR, M. D.

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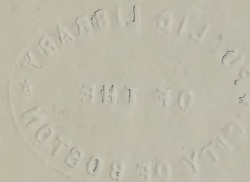
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HIGH INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF THE

PRIZE BOOKS ANGLES

Vol. 24. L. A. 103

London :

Printed by J. JOHNSON, and W. DAVIES, in the Strand.

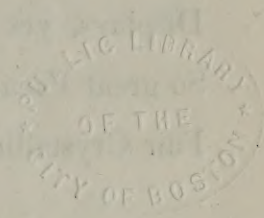
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THE
BIBLIOMANIA,
AN EPISTLE,
TO RICHARD HEBER, ESQ.

WHAT wild desires, what restless torments seize
The hapless man, who feels the book-disease,
If niggard Fortune cramp his gen'rous mind,
And Prudence quench the Spark by heaven assign'd!
With wistful glance his aching eyes behold 5
The Princeps-copy, clad in blue and gold,

Where the tall Book-case, with partition thin,
 Displays, yet guards the tempting charms within :
 So great Facardin view'd, as sages* tell,
 Fair Crystalline immur'd in lucid cell. 10

Not thus the few, by happier fortune grac'd,
 And blest, like you, with talents, wealth and taste,
 Who gather nobly, with judicious hand,
 The Muse's treasures from each letter'd strand.
 For you the Monk illum'd his pictur'd page, 15
 For you the press defies the Spoils of age ;
 FAUSTUS for you infernal tortures bore,
 For you ERASMUS† starv'd on Adria's shore.
 The FOLIO-ALDUS loads your happy Shelves,
 And dapper ELZEVIRS, like fairy elves, } 20
 Shew their light forms amidst the well-gilt Twelves :
 In slender type the GIOLITOS shine,
 And bold BODONI stamps his Roman line.

* *Sages.* Count Hamilton, in the *Quatre Facardins*, and Mr. M. Lewis, in his *Tales of Romance*.

† See the *Opulentia Sordida*, in his *Colloquies*, where he complains so feelingly of the spare Venetian diet.

For you the LOUVRE opes its regal doors,
 And either DIDOT lends his brilliant stores : 25
 With faultless types, and costly sculptures bright,
 IBARRA'S Quixote charms your ravish'd sight :
 LABORDE in splendid tablets shall explain
 Thy beauties, glorious, tho' unhappy SPAIN !
 O, hallowed name, the theme of future years, 30
 Embalm'd in Patriot-blood, and England's tears,
 Be thine fresh honours from the tuneful tongue,
 By Isis' streams which mourning Zion sung !

But devious oft' from ev'ry classic Muse,
 The keen Collector meaner paths will choose : 35
 And first the Margin's breadth his soul employs,
 Pure, snowy, broad, the type of nobler joys.
 In vain might HOMER roll the tide of song,
 Or HORACE smile, or TULLY charm the throng ;
 If crost by Pallas' ire, the trenchant blade 40
 Or too oblique, or near, the edge invade,
 The Bibliomane exclaims, with haggard eye,
 ' No Margin ! ' turns in haste, and scorns to buy.

He turns where PYBUS rears his Atlas-head,
 Or MADOC's mass conceals its veins of lead. 45
 The glossy lines in polish'd order stand,
 While the vast margin spreads on either hand,
 Like Russian wastes, that edge the frozen deep,
 Chill with pale glare, and lull to mortal sleep.*

Or English books, neglected and forgot, 50
 Excite his wish in many a dusty lot :
 Whatever trash *Midwinter* gave to day,
 Or *Harper's* rhiming sons, in paper gray,
 At ev'ry auction, bent on fresh supplies,
 He cons his Catalogue with anxious eyes : 55
 Where'er the slim Italics mark the page,
Curious and rare his ardent mind engage.
 Unlike the Swans, in Tuscan Song display'd,
 He hovers eager o'er Oblivion's Shade,

* It may be said that Quintilian recommends margins ; but it is with a view to their being occasionally occupied : Debet vacare etiam locus, in quo notentur quæ scribentibus solent extra ordinem, id est ex aliis quam qui sunt in manibus loci, occurrere. Irrumpunt enim optimi nonnunquam Sensus, quos neque inserere oportet, neque differre tutum est.

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He was therefore no *Margin-man*, in the modern sense.

To snatch obscurest names from endless night, 60
 And give COKAIN or FLETCHER* back to light.
 In red morocco drest he loves to boast
 The bloody murder, or the yelling ghost ;
 Or dismal ballads, sung to crouds of old,
 Now cheaply bought for thrice their weight in gold. 65
 Yet to th' unhonour'd dead be Satire just ;
 Some flow'rs † " smell sweet, and blossom in their dust."
 'Tis thus ev'n SHIRLEY boasts a golden line,
 And LOVELACE strikes, by fits, a note divine.
 Th' unequal gleams like midnight-lightnings play, 70
 And deepen'd gloom succeeds, in place of day.

But human bliss still meets some envious storm ;
 He droops to view his PAYNTER's mangled form :

* *Fletcher.* A translator of Martial. A very bad Poet, but *exceedingly scarce.*

† Only the actions of the just
 Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.

SHIRLEY.

Perhaps Shirley had in view this passage of Persius :

Nunc non é tumulo, fortunataque favilla
 Nascentur Violæ ?

Sat. 1. l. 37.

Presumptuous grief, while pensive Taste repines
 O'er the frail relics of her Attic Shrines ! 75
 O for that power, for which magicians vye,
 To look through earth, and secret hoards descry !
 I'd spurn such gems as Marinel* beheld,
 And all the wealth Aladdin's cavern held,
 Might I divine in what mysterious gloom 80
 The rolls of sacred bards have found their tomb :
 Beneath what mould'ring tower, or waste champain,
 Is hid MENANDER, sweetest of the train ;
 Where rests ANTIMACHUS' forgotten lyre,
 Where gentle SAPPHO's still seductive fire ; 85
 Or he, † whom chief the laughing Muses own,
 Yet skill'd with softest accents to bemoan
 Sweet Philomel, ‡ in strains so like her own. }

The menial train has prov'd the Scourge of wit,
 Ev'n OMAR burnt less Science than the spit. 90

* Faërie Queen.

† Aristophanes.

‡ See his exquisite hymn to the Nightingale, in his *Opvibes*.

Earthquakes and wars remit their deadly rage,
 But ev'ry feast demands some fated page.
 Ye Towers of Julius,* ye alone remain
 Of all the piles that saw our nation's stain,
 When HARRY's sway opprest the groaning realm, 95
 And Lust and Rapine seiz'd the wav'ring helm.
 Then ruffian-hands defaced the sacred fanes,
 Their saintly statues, and their storied panes;
 Then from the chest, with ancient art embost,
 The Penman's pious scrolls were rudely tost; 100
 Then richest manuscripts, profusely spread,
 The brawny Churl's devouring Oven fed:
 And thence Collectors date the heav'nly ire,
 That wrapt Augusta's domes in sheets of fire. †

 Taste, tho' misled, may yet some purpose gain, 105
 But Fashion guides a ‡book-compelling train.
 Once, far apart from Learning's moping crew,
 The travell'd beau display'd his red-heel'd shoe,

* Gray.

† The fire of London.

‡ Cloud-compelling Jove.——Pope's Iliad.

Till ORFORD rose, and told of rhiming Peers,
 Repeating *noble* words to polish'd ears;* 110
 Taught the gay croud to prize a flutt'ring name,
 In trifling toil'd, nor ' blush'd to find it fame.'
 The letter'd fop now takes a larger scope,
 With classic furniture, design'd by HOPE,
 (HOPE, whom Upholst'ers eye with mute despair, 115
 The doughty pedant of an elbow-chair ;)
 Now warm'd by ORFORD, and by GRANGER school'd,
 In Paper-books, superbly gilt and tool'd,
 He pastes, from injur'd volumes snipt away,
 His *English Heads*, in chronicled array. 120
 Torn from their destin'd page, (unworthy meed
 Of knightly counsel, and heroic deed)
 Not FAITHORNE's stroke, nor FIELD's own types can save
 † The gallant VERES, and one-eyed OGLE brave.

* ----- gaudent prænominē molles

Auriculæ.

JUVENAL.

† *The gallant Veres, and one-eyed Ogle.* Three fine heads, for the sake of which, the beautiful and interesting Commentaries of Sir Francis Vere have been mutilated by Collectors of English portraits.

Indignant readers seek the image fled, 125
 And curse the busy fool, who *wants a head*.

Proudly he shews, with many a smile elate,
 The scrambling subjects of the *private plate* ;
 While Time their actions and their names bereaves,
 They grin for ever in the guarded leaves. 130

Like Poets, born, in vain Collectors strive
 To cross their Fate, and learn the art to thrive.
 Like Cacus, bent to tame their struggling will,
 The tyrant-passion drags them backward still :
 Ev'n I, debarr'd of ease, and studious hours, 135
 Confess, mid' anxious toil, its lurking pow'rs.
 How pure the joy, when first my hands unfold
 The small, rare volume, black with tarnish'd gold !
 The Eye skims restless, like the roving bee,
 O'er flowers of wit, or song, or repartee, 140
 While sweet as Springs, new-bubbling from the stone,
 Glides through the breast some pleasing theme unknown.

Now dipt in *ROSSI's terse and classic style,
 His harmless tales awake a transient smile.
 Now BOUCHET's motley stores my thoughts arrest, 145
 With wond'rous reading, and with learned jest.
 Bouchet,† whose tomes a grateful line demand,
 The valued gift of STANLEY's lib'ral hand.
 Now sadly pleased, through faded Rome I stray,
 And mix regrets with gentle DU BELLAY;‡ 150
 Or turn, with keen delight, the curious page,
 Where hardy §Pasquin braves the Pontiff's rage.

But D——n's strains should tell the sad reverse,
 When Business calls, invet'rate foe to verse!
 Tell how 'the Demon claps his iron hands,' 155
 'Waves his lank locks, and scours along the lands.'
 Though wintry blasts, or summer's fire I go,
 To scenes of danger, and to sights of woe.

* Generally known by the name of Janus Nicius Erythræus. The allusion is to his Pinacotheca.

† Les Serées de Guillaume Bouchet, a book of uncommon rarity. I possess a handsome copy by the kindness of Colonel Stanley.

‡ Les Regrets, by Joachim du Bellay, contain a most amusing and instructive Account of Rome, in the 16th Century.

§ Pasquillorum Tomi duo.

Ev'n when to Margate ev'ry Cockney roves,
 And brainsick poets long for shelt'ring groves, 160
 Whose lofty shades exclude the noontide glow,
 While Zephyrs breathe, and waters trill below, *
 Me rigid Fate averts, by tasks like these,
 From heav'nly musings, and from letter'd ease.

Such wholesome checks the better Genius sends, 165
 From dire rehearsals to protect our friends :
 Else when the social rites our joys renew,
 The stuff'd Portfolio would alarm your view,
 Whence volleying rhimes your patience would o'ercome,
 And, spite of kindness, drive you early home. 170
 So when the traveller's hasty footsteps glide
 Near smoaking lava, on Vesuvio's side,
 Hoarse-mutt'ring thunders from the depths proceed,
 And spouting fires incite his eager speed.

* Errare per lucos, æmāna,
 Quos et aquæ subeunt et auræ.

Appall'd he flies, while rattling show'rs invade, 175
Invoking ev'ry Saint for instant aid :
Breathless, amaz'd, he seeks the distant shore,
And vows to tempt the dang'rous gulph no more.

FINIS.

MANCHESTER,
APRIL, 1809.

